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REVIEW OF BOOKS.

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*Matins and Vespers, with Hymns and Occasional Devotional Pieces.*  
*By John Bowring.*

IF we study human character and the mind of man, we shall find the great leading mental distinctions more reducible to classification than might be at first imagined. No doubt, as we approach the individual, in the scale of descent the varieties are perplexing and numerous; but it is surprising how many of these may be legitimately marshalled under a few general indications of taste, temperament, and predisposition. Hume, without attempting any thing very profound or systematic on the subject, has supplied very elegant sketches of four grand characteristic tendencies, under the respective denominations of the STOIC, or man of lofty and determined moral rectitude; the SCEPTIC, or subtle, acute, and investigative inquirer; the EPICUREAN, or votary of elegant and refined self-enjoyment; and the PLATONIST, or tender and devotional contemplatist. Hume, in adopting these Grecian distinctions, by no means confined himself to the mere learned acceptance of them, but borrowed the terms, because the associations connected with them might assist a more general application. We refer to them with a similar restriction; to which we may add, that however debased and vulgarised by ignorance or unfavourable circumstances, one of these dispositions of the Grecian schools is traceable in nearly every individual. What stage of life will not exhibit a sense of the dignity of moral self-estimation,—display a restless, curious, and disputatious spirit of enquiry,—a disposition to self enjoyment, which, however guarded, is always on the brink of the Circean cup, and too often a slave to it,—and lastly, a warm and devotional enthusiasm, which creates a pillow for the soul out of the “evidence of things unseen,” and excites to an eternal sentiment of contemplative adoration,—no matter how coarse the materials of the pillow aforesaid, or how vague, inadequate, or even monstrous, the idea of the object adored. The poor savage, who is *particularly* disposed to “see God in clouds, or hear him in the wind,” in his mental constitution is not very materially distinguished from the sentimental devotee, whose fancy is replete with sublime and beautiful images, and whose soul, abounding with lofty and eloquent aspirations, soars among the most distinguished of the spirits whose essence, as Emanuel Swedenburgh might say, is LOVE.

We have been led into the foregoing observations by Mr. Bowring's Preface, which clearly ranks him among Hume's Platonists, as will be seen by the following remarks, which not being very long, we give entire:—

"Those who are acquainted with the little volume by Dr. Witschel, entitled, *Morgen und Abend Opfer*, which has passed through several editions in Germany, will see how largely I have been indebted to it. It first suggested the idea, that a similar collection might serve the cause of religion and virtue at home.

"So much of serene and so much of joyful feeling, so much of calm and grateful recollection, so much of present peace and comfort, and so much of holy and transporting hope, are connected with the cultivation of the devotional spirit,—that to assist its exercises, to administer to its wants, and to accompany its heavenly aspirations, are objects worthy of the noblest, the best ambition.

"In attempting to give some of the ornaments of song to such contemplations and such expressions as become those who have formed a true estimate of life and of the ends of living, I trust I have never forgotten that the substance of piety is of higher interest than any of its decorations,—that the presence of truth is of more importance than the garment it wears.

"I have often witnessed, with complacency and delight, the consoling influence produced by the recollection of some passage of devotional poetry, under circumstances the most disheartening and sufferings the most oppressive. Should any fragment of this little book, remembered and dwelt upon in moments of gloom and anxiety, tend to restore peace, to awaken fortitude, to renew or to create confidence in heaven, I shall have obtained the boon for which I pray,—the end to which I aspire.

"These Hymns were not written in the pursuit of fame or literary triumph. They are full of borrowed images, of thoughts and feeling excited less by my own contemplations than by the writings of others. I have not sought to be original. To be useful is my first ambition—that obtained, I am indifferent to the rest."

The plan of Mr. Bowring is somewhat formal: There are Matins and Vespers for every day in the week, and these are repeated for each of the four seasons of the year. If we were disposed to be very critical, we should say, that as these poetical meditations are not made especially applicable to the change of season, we perceive no advantage in this arrangement. But these are minor considerations; the merit of this volume appears to us to consist chiefly in the pathos and delicacy of the poetical feeling scattered over it. This diffusive sort of merit renders adequate extract difficult; but possibly, as a single specimen, the following "*Evening Thoughts on Death*" may be found sufficiently characteristic:—

"The good man dies—it grieves us:  
Why should the good man die?  
He dies—but, dying, leaves us  
A lasting legacy.  
And this becomes our comforter;  
And sweeter is the thought  
Of him who is departed,  
Than all that death hath left:—  
No longer, broken-hearted,  
Deem that thou art bereft;  
For, O! the good man's memory  
Is sweeter far than aught.

No sorrows now disturb him,  
No disappointment there;  
No worldly pride to curb him  
In his sublime career:  
Heaven's azure arch is over him,  
Earth's tranquil breast beneath.

The stars are brightly glowing,  
 The breezes play around,  
 The flowers are sweetly blowing,  
 The dew is on the ground,  
 And emerald mosses cover him—  
 How beautiful is death!

His life—a summer's even,  
 Whose sun of light, tho' set  
 Amidst the clouds of heaven,  
 Leaves streams of brightness yet;  
 And thus he sinks victoriously  
 Into his ocean throne:  
 Then darkness gathers round him—  
 'Tis but a night:—again  
 He bursts the chains that bound him;  
 He rises from the main,  
 And marches heavenward gloriously  
 In splendours of its own.

Yon gems so sweetly sparkling  
 On heaven's cerulean deep,  
 What time the twilight darkling  
 Brings nature's hours of sleep,  
 Are perhaps the bright receptacles  
 Of disembodied souls;—  
 Of souls that, long desiring  
 Some more than mortal joy,  
 Burst in their proud aspiring,  
 And fix themselves on high;  
 And on this earth look tenderly,  
 That low beneath them rolls.

Yes! in those orbs of glory  
 Methinks I see the ray,  
 Which wisdom's sages hoary  
 Have scattered o'er my way,  
 With brighter wisdom perfected,  
 All strength—all purity.  
 In yonder gentle star-light  
 I see the holy tear,  
 Glistening in fair tho' far light,  
 Which once consoled me here—  
 Till I was left in wretchedness,  
 And none to weep with me.

Roll on, fair worlds! and over  
 Earth's vale your torches blend:  
 In each my thoughts discover  
 Smiles of some cherished friend,  
 Whose melancholy pilgrimage  
 Wearies the heart no more.  
 O yes! I hear their voices,  
 O yes! their forms I see;  
 And then my soul rejoices,  
 And raptured seems to be  
 Their momentary visitant;  
 But soon the dream is o'er.

I'll build a faue Elysian  
 Among those towers divine,  
 And there in hallowed vision,  
 When gloomy thoughts are mine,  
 Will soar in glowing ecstasy—  
 There shall my joys be stored;  
 And there my soul, reposing  
 On contemplation's breast,



When earthly scenes are closing,  
 Shall find a place of rest,  
 And leave this lowly solitude  
 Forgotten—undeplored.

This volume will be popular among a large class of devotional people, and might reasonably be so among all; but we suspect that there are still larger bodies to whom its unity and intellectuality will form no recommendation, however aided by religious fervour and poetical feeling,—partisans to whom the “issues” of all finely touched spirits are but *splendida peccata*, if they pronounce not their *shibboleth*, and echo not their *slang*. Q.

### THE NEAPOLITAN BANDIT \*.

WHEN I was at Naples some years since, I was much struck by the following relation, which I believe to be in every respect authentic. It contains some interesting traits of the generosity, humanity, and fearless temper of our English Naval Officers; and offers, at the same time, a casual specimen of the native ferocity, and cool disregard in shedding human blood, which characterises the Italian Bandit.

A party of Englishmen, consisting of some travellers and the principal officers of two frigates then lying off Naples, were dining at the house of the English Minister. In the course of the evening, a conversation was started on the subject of the frequent robberies which, at that period, were continually taking place in the Neapolitan territory, and on the confines between that and the Roman states. This conversation naturally led to a discussion on the character of the famous Bandit-chief Gregorio, who had recently distinguished himself by uncommon acts of depredation, displaying at the same time occasional traits of courage, generosity, and devotedness, which were well worthy of a better cause.

The most attentive listener to this exciting conversation was Captain D——, who commanded one of the frigates already mentioned. There are some chords of common sympathy which belong to the brave of every class; and their vibration was, on this occasion, powerfully awakened in the mind of Captain D——, by the relation of the extraordinary facts to which he had so attentively listened. He could not refrain from expressing the strongest desire to behold the Bandit Gregorio; and this overpowering wish was even less manifested by the form of words which he used, than by the expression of energy and an eagerness to gratify his curiosity, which was depicted on his countenance.

Some days had elapsed since the conversation to which I have alluded took place, when Captain D——, accompanied by a friend, was taking his evening ride in the direction of Capo di Monte. Having ascended that eminence, they had left their carriage, and walked forward to some distance. Although deeply engaged in conversation, they could not help observing two men, who were partly loitering about,

\* Our word Bandit is derived from the Italian *bandito*, or more properly from the verb *bandire*, to proscribe. The plural, *Banditti*, is a corruption of the Italian plural, *banditi*.

and partly pursuing the track which they had taken. The dress of these men was similar to that worn by the lawless marauders who infest this territory, but their countenances and manner betrayed nothing like an evil intention—there rather appeared a desire on their part to attract the notice of the English gentlemen: for what purpose, could not possibly be divined.

They at length succeeded in commencing a conversation, which soon led, probably from design, to the mention of the frequent robberies which had lately been committed, even in the very neighbourhood of the capital, and to the subject of the banditti who, in spite of the increased activity of Gens d'armes and police-officers, had established and maintained their abode in the wild fastnesses which divide the Neapolitan and Roman states. The Englishmen enquired of the strangers what was their occupation. They replied, without any reserve, that they were robbers, declaring at the same time that they fearlessly avowed themselves as such to English officers, from whom they could not have the slightest apprehension of treachery. But these men had an object in view; and as it was now growing dark, and they were already nearly within sight of the carriage, no time was to be lost. One of them therefore, with some hesitation, observed to Captain D— that he was aware that the latter had, a few evenings since, at the table of the English minister, expressed an earnest desire to see the famous bandit-chief Gregorio. Continuing to address himself to Captain D— “I am the friend of Gregorio,” he said, “he is my leader; and if you will assure me that your wish proceeded from a strong and worthy feeling, and not from a momentary impulse of light curiosity, I will answer for its gratification.” Captain D— was greatly surprised by this sudden and unexpected appeal. He however instantly declared that he desired most fervently to see Gregorio, and that he was ready to encounter both trouble and risk, could he thereby hope to realise such a desire. The stranger assured him that its accomplishment depended upon himself, and that if he would confide in him, and act with honour and courage, he would ensure to him an interview with his chief. Captain D— continuing to express his readiness to comply with any terms that might be proposed, the stranger directed him to repair on the following evening to a spot, which he most particularly described, a few miles without the city, in the direction of Pausilipo—“You will,” he said, “come to a grass-field, at the extremity of which is a wood; in this field you will observe a woman dressed as a peasant, two children will be playing near her. So soon as this woman sees you arrive, she will quit the field, and enter into the wood. Follow her, and your curiosity will be gratified. But let no one accompany you, and let the present interview remain a secret; or, to your regret, you will lose your labour, and the present opportunity will never be renewed.” The interview between the two Englishmen and the robbers now ended. Captain D— and his friend returned to Naples, with a fixed determination on the mind of the former to pursue this interesting adventure. Towards dusk, on the following evening, he arrived at the spot which had been so accurately described. He saw the peasant in the grass-field, and the two children were playing near her. On his approach the peasant quitted the field, and entered the wood. Captain D— followed. They proceeded



till they reached a small hut, which having entered, the female closed the door of a room, into which she had led the Captain—and he remained, for a few minutes, alone. Suddenly the door was opened—and a tall athletic figure, in the bandit-costume, stood before him. “I am Gregorio!” he said, “whom your desire to see has brought hither. Your wish is realised, and your confidence is not misplaced.” A conversation of some length ensued, which, for the sake of brevity, I pass over. Before they parted, the robber confessed to Captain D—that he had purposely contrived an interview with him, from the hope which he had conceived of obtaining his assistance in carrying into effect a project, of which the success was of vital importance to him. “I am weary,” he said, “of my present mode of life, which, besides being naturally full of danger and harassing in the extreme, is, at the present moment, rendered infinitely more so to me by the very critical situation in which I am personally placed. Great rewards are offered for my apprehension—extraordinary measures have been of late adopted, of which I am, in fact, the principal object. My safest retreats have been discovered, and many among my followers are of doubtful faith. They may be allured by hopes of indemnity, or dazzled by the amount of the reward which awaits their treachery. Under the pressure of these circumstances, I have meditated an escape from this country, and I implore you to afford me your assistance.”

Captain D— offered his services, and would, as readily, have pledged his honour for the maintenance of inviolable secrecy; but the frank and confiding character of these brave men, which had so advantageously developed itself during the brief course of these events, rendered on either side such a request or such an assurance equally superfluous.

It happened fortunately for the success of Gregorio's project, that Captain D— was about to sail in a few days for Malta; it was agreed upon, therefore, that on the third evening from the present, Gregorio should meet Captain D— and some of his officers, at the hour of midnight, at Santa Lucia, where the Captain would order his boat to be in readiness to convey them on board the frigate, having in the meantime prepared every thing for setting sail immediately for Malta. The appointed evening came; Gregorio was punctual; Captain D— and his friends found him at Santa Lucia, and they were proceeding towards the beach where the frigate's boat awaited them, but, to their great surprise and consternation, they no sooner came within view of the boat, than they beheld at the same time that a sentinel was posted close to the spot where she lay. This was an embarrassment they were far from expecting; although as the ministers both of the police and of the custom-house were, at that time, continually on the alert, the circumstance was more unlucky than strange. What was to be done! Gregorio was neither wanting in presence of mind, nor in resources against such contingences; he immediately offered to approach the sentinel, and to stab him to the heart. Such summary proceedings were not, however, to the taste of Englishmen, and Gregorio was withheld from executing his purpose. Fortunately the exigency of the moment had, in the meantime, suggested to Captain D— a stratagem which, as practised on the simplicity of the sentinel, was as effectual as it was ridiculous. Making a motion to his friends

to keep back, Captain D— approached the sentinel, and putting a piece of money into his hand, informed him with an air of mystery that he had a tender connection with a lady who resided at a palace nearly opposite his post, that she had consented to come off with him on that evening, and that he was about to convey her on board his ship. He pointed out particularly to the sentinel the lady's window, and desired him to approach, and to throw against it some pebbles, which was the signal agreed upon between them. He directed the sentinel, as soon as the lady appeared, to conduct her to the boat, which he pointed out, and concluded with promising him a further reward for his trouble. The sentinel believed the story, and he felt the ducat which Captain D— pressed upon his hand; he left his post, and whilst he was aiming pebbles at the imaginary lady's window, the boat pushed off, and reached the ship in safety.

A short time after their arrival at Malta, Gregorio requested a further favour of his deliverer. His slender funds were exhausted, and he purposed supplying his wants by drawing a bill upon a Neapolitan nobleman, whose name was familiar to Captain D—. He also wished to devote a part of the proceeds to the necessities of his wife, whom, with two small children, he had felt himself under the necessity of leaving in the neighbourhood of Naples. Captain D— expressed his surprise at the connection which appeared to exist between the nobleman and the robber; but Gregorio merely smiled, and assured his friend that the bill would be punctually honoured. With the assistance of a merchant with whom he was acquainted, Captain D— remitted the bill to Naples, and, in the meantime, supplied Gregorio with a small sum to meet his present wants. The bill was immediately accepted, and honourably discharged; and the balance which remained, after deducting the sum directed to be paid to his wife, was transmitted to Malta for the use of Gregorio.

GIANNI.

### CONVERSATIONS OF THE DEAD.—No. V.

*Scene.*—The AMARANTHINE BOWER of MILTON, in ELYSIUM.

*Interlocutors.*—SOCRATES, MILTON.

*M.* I AM much gratified by this visit, Socrates; and will confess to you, that I have long felt a poet's anxiety to know what the first of philosophers thinks of my *Paradise Lost*. I suppose you have seen it?

*S.* Of course I have; the God of Letters is too proud of them not to let the spirits of the Great Epics have free egress into these regions of bliss.

*M.* And what is your opinion then—may I enquire?

*S.* That you have converted a silly legend to a very fine poem. The beauties you have displayed in that work, I love; I am delighted with its wildnesses; I admire its sublimities; but—could you not have infused into it a little more morality?

*M.* More morality!—Have you considered the time when and the circumstances under which, I wrote?

*S.* I have; and they form some apology. But you enquired what *I thought of the Poem*. Did you expect me to dissemble what I thought, in deference to times and circumstances?



*M.* The grandeur of your transit hither, effectually repels the supposition; I cannot entertain it for a moment. But, where are the immoralities? Or, since you have not gone quite so far as to pronounce the work immoral, where is the absence of morality? Will you condescend to a few particulars?

*S.* Most willingly, if you desire it. When you invoked the Holy Spirit, and the Muse, to animate your exertions by their assistance, so that you might be able to

“ ——— assert eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to man,”—

you appear to have sincerely intended to set yourself down to that arduous but delightful task—

*M.* And certainly I did so intend.

*S.* You had, moreover, a magnificent gleam of lofty truth, which might have enabled you to keep in view the path of unerring rectitude, when you supposed that your Dæmon must “prefer

Before all Temples, th’ upright heart and pure.”

Oh, Milton! pattern of patriots and poets, as beyond all question you have been,—Oh, that you had kept that bright mark for ever in view! You were then visited by the *thought*-spring from on high! but, instead of enshrining the idea of “the upright heart and pure,” in the chrystal of your intellect, you preferred to turn aside and worship in the dark recesses of the *Temples*. You remember that I complained not of your deficiency of Religion, but of Morality; nor will you seek to shelter yourself, as Bishop Newton would shelter you, by substituting the former for the latter.—Shelter, did I say? This is precisely the spot where the Bishop would bring you forth into the full blaze of public observation, and of critical animadversion, as a necessary consequence. But you have granted that it was your sincere purpose to

——— assert eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to man.

*M.* Yes.

*S.* By the way, Pope, I perceive, has thought fit to quote that fine verse of yours, offering it, like yourself, as pledge and prospectus of what he is about to perform; but substituting, I cannot see why, the word “vindicate,” for your plain and expressive term *justify*. Pope has, however, kept his engagement with his readers, without endeavouring to substitute the doctrinal subtleties of the religious schools, for sound ethics.

*M.* Which you appear to assume that I have not.

*S.* Nay, Milton—let us not be precipitate. I am travelling with you on the road of enquiry, and we have met with another poet, and a bishop. Let us shew them a little courtesy. Perhaps you will correct me, and will say, we have met with Pope, but Dr. Newton has overtaken us. I shall not contradict this. I shall desire only to have a little amicable chat with the bishop, as we have had a passing word with the poet. You desired to hear the details of my objections to the morality of your poem. I confess that they are somewhat more numerous than you may perhaps suppose; and would willingly allow you the support you may derive from the presence of your friend Bishop Newton; I would even confine myself, for the present, to the example which he has



selected, as illustrating the verse and the proposition before us—if you have no objection?

*M.* It is impossible, Socrates, that I could entertain the least; yet, Dr. Newton's reasoning is concerning the *Redemption* of man; and as the *Fall* precedes it in my Poem, as well as preceded it in fact, and as the moral argument which you are about to enter upon, can but divide itself into these two main branches, will it not be better to proceed with your objections in the natural order?

*S.* Agreed. I expected from you this candid objection; and, most willingly conforming to it, shall proceed with what you are pleased to term my moral argument: regarding your great work as a mass of philosophical poetry, and overlooking the anomalies which exist between your machinery and our present state. Continuing to address the Spirit of Inspiration—that is to say, the Holy Spirit or Muse whom you have previously invoked, and whom you here declare to be Omniscient; your words are—

“ Say first—for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view,  
Nor the deep tract of Hell—say first, what *cause*  
Mov'd our grand parents, in that happy state,  
*Favor'd of Heav'n so highly*, to fall off  
From their Creator, and transgress *his will*?  
For one restraint, lords of the world besides.”

Have you previously shown that your hero and heroine were highly favoured of Heaven? We will afterwards enquire whether you have truly declared *what* cause moved them; but I hope you will not think me playing the logician or sophist in this place, if I ask, Is here not a relative, without any antecedent term to give it meaning?

*M.* If, as is reported, you have revised and even added to the poetry of Euripides, you surely know, that in that divine art, it is sufficient if the relation be subsequently explained, provided the explanation be not too long delayed; and, in the present instance, is it not a sufficient showing, that, excepting for a single restraint, our first parents were lords of the world?

*S.* You assume then, that your readers know the nature, and reason, and extent, of that restraint?

*M.* They know it from their Scriptural reading. I rely on that knowledge. Yet not so entirely but that I soon proceed to particulars, as in the former case. I am gradually unfolding my design, and I here sketch, in few lines, what I afterwards finish up.

*S.* That is the answer I anticipated; you do not mean to say you have proved that Adam and Eve *were* highly favoured of Heaven? Or that you have shewn them to have been acquainted with the *nature* and *extent* of the restraint imposed upon them? Or that they had *sufficient power* allotted them to resist the means employed by the Tempter—or “infernal serpent,” as you call him?—I am led to fancy that we should crack the bone of contention here, and come at once to the marrow of the subject, if you would mention from what part or parts of your poem, I am to collect that finished picture of the primitive state, and the fall, of man, from which you would wish me to argue.

*M.* The subject and scenery of the two first books is Infernal. Heaven and Paradise open in the third.

*S.* The third book! Good. It is the very place to which I should myself have proposed to resort for correct premises, or information as to

your real meaning, had you not appeared to prohibit it when Dr. Newton pointed that way ; but that made me think *your* forbidden fruit grew in that quarter. I suspected that you was yourself shy, where the bishop was proud of you ; and really, Milton, I cannot but perceive that in those speeches of your Deities, to which you are, if I mistake not, reluctantly pointing, your poetic grandeur, in a great degree, forsakes you. You exhibit your mind in trammels. The dry doctrines and special pleading of the school divines, supplant for the time your peculiar majesty and profundity of thought. In asserting, and seeming to maintain, the theory of Free-will, you shew yourself a blenching, compelled, and predestined poet. There is a peering subtlety and sophistry about your argument, and mode of conducting it in this place, that countervails your own ostensible purposes. How great and original soever, elsewhere, you are here passive and puppet-like. In short, you appear to have permitted yourself to be beckoned away from your own "upright heart" to "the *Temples*," and to have allowed the priesthood to put false weights and scales into your hands. Shall I point to the fulcrum ? It is, unless I am mistaken, where you assert that "*Reason is Choice*"—making the erroneous dogma appear to flow from the fountain of Truth. The festoon of quibbles which you here display, and would pass off for diamonds and pearls of the first water, are held together by an artful twist of vagueness and ambiguity in the terms you employ. How can reason be choice ?—You are silent ; and I, alas ! am getting over-earnest. Will you permit me, Milton, to apologise ; and to ask which you esteem to be the most intense and correct species of reasoning ? Is it not that wherein there is least duplicity in the terms ? And is there not less duplicity in the mathematical species than in any other ?

*M.* I must grant you the affirmative of both those propositions, friend Socrates.

*S.* And when Euclid or Pythagoras set before us a theorem, such as that concerning triangles, wherein it is affirmed of every right angled triangle, that the square of the hypotenuse is equal to those of the base and perpendicular taken together—Is there room for distrust or denial in such cases ? Has *reason* any *choice* ?—Again you are silent, though I am cool. You make your Deity say of his great adversary, and his newly-formed Adam,—

——— " And now,  
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way  
Not far off Heav'n, in the precincts of light,  
Directly tow'rd's the new created world,  
And man there plac'd, with purpose to essay  
If him by force he can destroy, or worse  
By some false guile pervert ; and *shall* pervert,  
For *man* will hearken to his glozing lies,  
And *easily* transgress the sole command,  
Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall,  
He, and his faithless *progeny*. Whose fault ?  
Whose but his own ? Ingrate: he had of me  
*All he could have* ; I made him just and right :  
Sufficient to have stood, tho' free to fall.

Had the Grecian Jupiter delivered a speech so abounding with legal quibbling—so fraught with priestly sophistry—as this, what would you Christians have said to it ? Yet the deities of our exploded mythology



were believed to be controuled by Fate, while yours is omnipotent, as well as omniscient, immutable, and infinite in all his attributes;—so sing your Seraphs. No one, therefore, may dare to distrust *his* free-will (more than his boundless power) whatever may be said of that of his creatures. What, then, shall we say of the great First Cause and Author of all things, ordaining that the devil “*shall* pervert” man, and mar the merits of his own recent six days’ work? I think I had better speak tenderly of “glozing lies” in this place—But we will pass the next verse altogether, if you please: It is quite sufficient for my argument, that he whom you pronounce to be omnipotent, decrees that Adam shall *easily* transgress, and that his “faithless progeny” shall be involved with him in the ruinous—the unutterably dreadful—consequences. I at first (by mistake) read *fault*-less progeny; but at length I was compelled to perceive that, to the idea of that progeny’s being innocent of the transgression of their first parents, you seem to say, Hence—avaunt! The resistless and *all-merciful* Being here resolves that with Adam shall fall his *faithless* progeny; or rather, that that progeny shall continue successively to fall, for a period consisting of thousands of years, the passive soul of each individual being to himself the while its own universe, in point of inestimable value. Is it not so, Milton?

*M.* I can’t suppose that you would be guilty of any intentional misstatement, Socrates. Your errors, if you have committed any, may be subject to an after revision. Proceed.

*S.* If a frail and passionate mortal tyrant could, by his *fiat*, will the inevitable perdition of unborn ages, and were so to will, what would be his next sentiment—his first remorseful feeling after the decree had gone forth? Supposing him to be selfish and merciless, would he not still be conscience-smitten? Would he not wish to exonerate himself from the blame of his own mind, and from that of his posterity? and would he not hence be led to argue, or glozingly to persuade himself, that he had inflicted no more than well-deserved punishment?

*M.* It appears to me that such a tyrant would naturally feel and argue as you have said.—But I perceive that you are treating me as you did Hippias and the sophists of old.

*S.* And have I less reason? Can I do otherwise than enquire—which I do without abating my admiration of the rich, deep-toned harmony of your learned strains—whence the breathless haste with which you put it into the mouth of your Deity to follow, what I own appears to me to be an *un-merciful* decree towards Adam and his posterity, with—“Whose fault? whose but his own? ingrate: he had of me all he could have?”

*M.* Perhaps the necessity which I felt myself to be under, of conforming to the Hebrew or Chaldean legend, may have led me into error on this point.

*S.* Perhaps so; but do you plead *necessity* for yourself, while you disallow the plea to poor Adam and his posterity? Where was your reason, which you say “itself is choice?” and where your *faith*? By the way, you make your omnipotent author of “the high decree, unchangeable,” determine that the progeny of Adam shall be without faith. Will you dispute that faith, also, is an involuntary sentiment?

*M.* I meant to be understood, that the portion of mankind which proved faithless should fall.

S. What! fall into damnation for what they could not help?

M. Is not faith the result of conviction, and conviction of reasoning?

S. O! what, you are reverting to your former doctrine, in obedience to the force, I suppose, of habitual modes of thinking. My dear Milton, to compare, to weigh, to measure, motives, causes, and anticipated consequences,—what is it all, but to determine, according to *past experience*, what is most for our interest upon the whole? (or of the propositions set before us?) We may make mistakes, but, having ascertained this point, as we suppose, what choice have we left, but to pursue that interest, whether it be contracted to mere selfishness, or expanded (like your own, my patriotic friend) into the common good of society? But what past experience had that unhappy victim of *grace* and *glory*, whose supposed demerits we are discussing? He must have been entirely destitute of it. He had confessedly not tasted of the tree of knowledge till after the interdiction. In fact, the tempter, the tempted, and the temptation, were they not all the work of the same bountiful Creator? Would you punish men for not seeing, who are born blind? Or, if they were born foolish, would you excuse or commend,—far less would you laud and glorify a tyrant, for severely punishing their folly, while he asserted that they were free to be wise? Or does your system admit of second causes that are tantamount, or even superior to, the Great First Cause? Was it for *Omnipotence* to set a trap? Or did you expect your readers to forget or let go the meaning of that word, in deference to the Hebrew legend? To bring the matter more home to your own bosom, would you have acted thus by your own daughters? Would you, by tantalizing, have stimulated any desires which you had previously implanted in them, and then have severely punished them for the nominal transgression? More especially for a transgression, which, if they reasoned, they would know, per force of reason, could never injure you in the least? Would you go further than this, and for that nominal transgression punish, with unutterable torment, their unborn posterity for the subsequent four thousand years? Or would you rather appear to proceed thus far in seeming inexorable justice, in order that you might remit the threatened punishment, upon condition of your innocent and only Son, offering his life as an atonement or ransom for their disobedience? Further, would you annex to this another condition, that your daughters must

— “Bow and sue for GRACE with suppliant knee,  
And deify your power?”

In short, that *they* MUST, of their own FREE WILL, do that which your very Devil scorned to do? And would you ordain and continue all this enormous quantity of positive evil, in order to display the effulgence of your own *glory*, as you call it; or magnify that miscalled mercy, which “first and last shall *brightest* shine,” according to the conclusion of that memorable speech to which I shall limit my present observations? Another time—if that word may be used here—we may talk farther of these matters.



## TABLE TALK.

SLAVE INSURRECTIONS.—The recent insurrection in Demerara is piously and earnestly attributed by the planters to the motion of Mr. Buxton in the House of Commons, the felicities of slavery being such, that slaves never revolt but in consequence of philanthropical exertions in their favour! Persons who are in the habit of reading *ex parte* statements, with a view to what they *do not* as well as to what they *do* say, will be much edified by the rancorous imputation of blame by the slave-owners, for these turbulent demonstrations, to every thing or any thing but themselves. The notion that human beings, enjoying the manifold blessings attendant upon the condition of the field negro, should aspire after something beyond them, seems never to enter their heads; and although the barbarous treatment of slaves in all the *civdevant* Dutch colonies is notorious,\* it requires speeches in Parliament and Methodist Missionaries to make them act occasionally on the principles of resistance inherent even in the most degraded humanity. The terror and cruelty incidentally displayed in these accounts are very instructive, as exhibiting the wretched condition of the slave proprietors, and the tax they pay for their wretched and precarious supremacy. The Methodists deny that their Missionaries are the parties accused of abetting the negro discontent in this instance †; but it is amusing to witness the rancorous mention of the parties, whoever they are, whose only crime, we will venture to assert, has been the promulgation of the Christian doctrine of equality with too much good faith. The real state of the case is apparent from these very representations; for after being unable to show any extraordinary act of murder or cruelty on the part of the revolvers, they proceed to inform us that 300 of the latter were killed in what is termed a battle, not an individual having been slain on the side of the all-merciful Whites. It is one of the most humiliating spectacles in the world, to witness the eternal triumph of the most base and grovelling sense of self-interest over the more enlarged and better convictions of humanity and reason; but in no case is it exhibited more disgracefully than by the slave-owner, who, even when comparatively refined and educated, is unable to extricate himself from the effects of the utter perversion of understanding produced by the slave system. Bryan Edwards, for instance, was employed in drawing up the first accounts of Mungo Park. His personal interests being opposed to the abolition of the Slave Trade, he would not suffer any passage to stand in which the African traveller had expressed his conviction of its inhumanity. Park, among confidential friends, frequently complained that his book did not only not contain his opinions, but was interpolated with many which he utterly disclaimed. St. Domingo will eventually settle all these matters.

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OBSOLETE LAW.—When we duly reflect on the vast sum of human happiness and convenience which depends upon a clear and compre-

\* Consult Stedman and others.

† We suppose we must believe them, as also that their preachers are instructed “to teach slaves to obey their masters, as a part of *religious duty*.” Are these holy personages currying favour with the Holy Alliance?

hensive system of law and equity, and on the real benefit to mankind accruing from a species of reform, which of all others demands the widest consideration and the most acute penetration, we are astonished that the noble ambition of signalizing a reign by so patriotic an effort, is not indulged in the proper quarter. The Emperor Justinian was a very inefficient sovereign, but the digest of the Roman Law, effected under his patronage, will make him live for ever; and Napoleon, in his solitude, caught a glimpse of the truth, in respect to that performance—the Code Napoleone—which would entitle him more especially to the gratitude of mankind. But supposing that all sorts of legal leviathans, and the dirty sea of professional interests in which they wade, present too formidable an obstacle to a *general* revision of the law, a condensation and concordance of the statutes at large might at least be effected, if only to prevent such silly occurrences as the following:—“When a political stratagem was practised by Charles I. to keep certain members out of the House of Commons, by pricking them down as sheriffs in their different counties, among them was the celebrated Sir Edward Coke, whom the Government had made High Sheriff for Bucks. It was necessary, perhaps, to be a learned and practised lawyer to discover the means he took, in the height of his resentment, to elude the insult. This great lawyer, who himself, perhaps, had often administered the oath to the Sheriffs, and which it had, century after century, been usual for them to take, to the surprise of all persons, drew up exceptions against the Sheriffs’ oath. Coke sent his exceptions to the Attorney-General, who, by an immediate order in Council, submitted them to all the Judges of England. Our legal luminary had condescended only to some ingenious cavilling in three of his exceptions; but the fourth was of a nature which could not be overcome. All the Judges of England assented, and declared, that there was one part of this ancient oath which was perfectly irreligious, and must ever hereafter be left out. This article was, “That you shall do all your pain and diligence to destroy and make to cease all manner of heresies, commonly called *Lollaries*, within your bailiwick,” &c. The Lollards were the most ancient of Protestants, and had practised Luther’s sentiments: it was, in fact, condemning the established religion of the country! An order was issued from Hampton Court for the abrogation of this part of the oath; and at present all High Sheriffs owe this obligation to the resentment of Sir Edward Coke, for having been pricked down as Sheriff of Bucks, to be kept out of Parliament.”—Query. How many clerical and other abuses and demands are founded upon statutes framed in a spirit as essentially different from the existing constitutional law of the land, as that which was so strangely left to exact the putting down of opinions which had become the formal religion of it?

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THE RULING PASSION STRONG IN DEATH.—The celebrated Bayle died as he had lived, in the uninterrupted habits of composition; for with his dying hand, and nearly speechless, he sent a fresh proof to the printer.



## THE HOUSE OF MOURNING :

AN ELEGY.

*(Addressed to the kindred of one who died in India.)*

"Mark the end !"

## I.

WEEP on,—weep on, our sun is set,  
The light that leaves the shore  
May dawn upon the darkness yet,  
But it shall rise no more.

## II.

Oh ! though your many woes amassed  
Have drained your tears away,  
Yet must ye weep,—for this the last  
Shall wring them from your clay.

## III.

Weep,—weep for one beloved and lost,—  
The glory of his line ;  
More swiftly, now that hope is crost,  
We speed in our decline.

## IV.

He sleeps afar, where morning's bloom  
First burns along the skies—  
The broad day glares upon his tomb  
Before it hither flies.

## V.

He thought to reach his own dear land,—  
He dared to dream of joy,—  
Death started forth with mighty hand  
Uplifted to destroy !\*

## VI.

Methinks that he would watch the sun  
Go down to light the sea,  
And say,—“ farewell and journey on,  
But I will follow thee.”

## VII.

To know that seas must ever roll  
Between the friends he loved,—  
Oh ! what must that disdainful soul  
In dying hour have proved !†

## VIII.

Yet his was not a harder doom  
Than theirs who live to pine,  
And watch the long, long night of gloom  
For stars that never shine.

## IX.

Our house is like a ruined tower  
Through which the whirlwind strays,—  
A pile of clouds at evening hour  
That changes and decays.

## X.

We live like men that walk in sleep,—  
Like fires that smoulder down,—  
Like barks that drift upon the deep  
With mast and rudder gone.‡

\* Morte ebbi invidia al mio felice stato,  
Anzi alla speme e feglisi all' incontro  
Amezza via come nemico armato.—PETRARCH.

† Bacciommi in volto, e disse alma sdegnosa !—DANTE.

Not to be understood in the worst acceptation of the phrase, but in that in which the Florentine used it.

‡ The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn,  
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on.

## XI.

Our generation lies forgot,  
 Another springs to birth,  
 And meeting with as mean a lot  
 Is massed with common earth.

## XII.

Years roll on years,—day follows day,  
 Still look we to the morrow,  
 Till time hath sapped our dreams away,  
 And we are hoar in sorrow.

## XIII.

We dare not tempt each other's speech,—  
 We meditate and gaze,—  
 But that which is untold---to each  
 His brother's face betrays.

## XIV.

Oh ! think on *him*, when power and guile  
 Assail to bring ye low,  
 And ask your souls, if he would smile  
 On that ye seek to do ?

## XV.

The blood that through our arteries flies,  
 Forget not ye *who* gave,  
 Till truth expires and fame denies  
 That they were *chaste* and *brave*.\*

## XVI.

Away with discord,—know ye well  
 The snake that ye would cherish ?  
 That God would build his throne in Hell  
 Whose ire should never perish.

## XVII.

Our burning hearts are still our own,  
 Unconquered though forlorn ;  
 Then bend not when the mighty frown,  
 But fling them back their scorn.

\* An allusion to an obscure proverb, and what the reader need not understand.

## NOTICE.

Next week, we shall commence a REVIEW, with EXTRACTS, of the next forthcoming Volume of DON JUAN, which is now in the Press.

ERRATUM.---In No. XVI. page 256, line 2, for "the muse of warriors," read "the nurse," &c.

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